

Naturally, the "confessed" spies declared that their admissions were voluntary; what would one expect from a man who'd been in an Iranian jail for some 15 months, never allowed to see his lawyer?

It was reminiscent of Iran's Lebanese allies distributing videotapes of their American hostages pleading guilty to sundry offenses, and North Vietnam staging televised war crime confessions by American POW's.

No court in any civilized country would consider such confessions to be valid, but then again few would call Iran "civilized."

If the Iranian charges were true and the confessions freely given, there would be no reason to keep the evidence and the trial secret.

The defense attorney for one of the three said that under Islamic law and international norms, a confession given by a prisoner after more than a year in jail is invalid.

International attention is focused on the courtroom in the southern city of Shiraz. President Clinton has repeatedly spoken out, as have Members of Congress, the nation's governors and many mayors and other public officials.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright last week warned Iranian leaders the trial "will have repercussions everywhere" on that country's efforts to "earn international respect." That came in the same week that her department officially reaffirmed Iran's status as a leading state sponsor of international terrorism.

Other leaders have made serious and personal efforts to help: the Pope, UN Secretary General Kofi Anan, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Prime

More than 60 journalists, human rights activists and diplomats from the around the globe stood vigil outside the locked doors of a legal system controlled by the most extreme factions in that country. Inside, the lives of 13 Jews were in the hands of a single man who sits as prosecutor, judge and jury.

Israel has privately assured the United States the men are innocent and it is unaware of any links between the accused and Israeli officials. Charges that they also spied for the United States have apparently been dropped.

Some of the international pressure is apparently getting attention in Tehran. That's why the prisoners were presented on television confessing. It may also explain why the trial was adjourned for Passover, not exactly a national holiday in the fervently Islamic state, and why the three youngest defendants were released on bail. Trials in Iran usually last hours, not weeks as this one is expected to. The court could have declared them guilty and quickly hanged them, as happened three years ago with two other Jews similarly charged.

But will those gestures, aimed at the international community, be enough to save the lives of these men? What do these gestures mean?

The hard-liners have never shown much sensitivity to world opinion. In fact, they seem to revel in sticking their thumbs in the eyes of public opinion, especially American and Israeli eyes.

Just before the trial began, a leading cleric delivered a sermon over state radio declaring, "These people are spies . . . they are Jews and are . . . by nature enemies of Muslims."

These 13 Jews are pawns in a battle between the hard-line Islamic extremists and the reformers, who scored another important victory in last Friday's runoff elections, for control of an ancient land whose chief ex-

ports of late have been religious bigotry and terrorism. One thing the ruling ayatollahs and the reformers led by President Khatemi seem to agree on is their hatred of Israel.

If the verdicts are guilty, which carries a death penalty, some fear the ayatollahs declare that all Jews are Zionists, and the Zionist state is the mortal enemy of Islam and Iran, and thus all Jews are enemies and spies.

Iran wages daily war against Israel through proxies such as Hezbollah. Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said again recently the only way to solve the problems of the Middle East is to annihilate Israel.

As the trial in Shiraz opened, there was an event worth noting in another country with a long and bitter history of anti-Semitism: Poland. Some 5,000 young Jews from around the world, led by the presidents of Israel and Poland, took part in the annual March of the Living from Auschwitz to Birkenau to honor those who perished solely for the crime of being Jews.

Just weeks earlier, a British judge struck an important blow for the cause of truth and morality, a blow in an ongoing battle against Holocaust denial that should never have been necessary.

Other nations are at long last beginning to come to terms with their Holocaust guilt and with Holocaust denial; throughout the Arab world, however, denial is a surging companion to rising anti-Semitism, often officially encouraged as in Egypt and Syria.

In this country, too, we have made tremendous progress in confronting the scourge of anti-Semitism, but there are counter-forces, including a presidential candidate who admires Hitler, belittles the Holocaust and blames the Jews for dragging America into World War II.

The trial of the Iran 13 is an alarming reminder that for all the lessons learned from the tragic past, there remain places where Hitler's work is commended, not condemned. It is a clarion warning of our responsibility to stand guard on the legacy of Hitler's victims in Iran and around the world.

#### VIEJAS BAND OF KUMEYAAY INDIANS: SPIRIT OF COOPERATION AWARD

#### HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2000

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, today I recognize the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, as it is honored by the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council, AFL-CIO, at its 12th annual Worker's Memorial Dinner with its Spirit of Cooperation Award.

The Viejas Indian Casino recently signed a contract with the Communications Workers of America Local 9400, in what is possibly the first ever union contract with any Tribal Casino in the United States. Not only did Viejas sign an agreement with the union allowing it to organize workers at the casino, but they also gave the union space for a temporary organizing office on the property and allowed the union easy access to the employees.

After the representation election, Viejas and the union successfully negotiated a contract that provides good wages, benefits, and union

representation to employees. Viejas has been model of employer attitude and has forced a truly special relationship with the union.

Viejas has also been a leader in supporting community efforts through their charitable giving programs and active participation in community and business associations.

My congratulations go to the Viejas Bank of Kumeyaay Indians for these significant contributions.

#### FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE CLARIFICATION ACT

#### HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2000

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce a bill that would make reasonable, and much needed change to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. The Family and Medical Leave Clarification Act will help implement and enforce the FMLA in a manner consistent with Congress' original intent.

I do not think anyone would dispute that the FMLA has helped those with serious family and medical crisis. However, some of the troublesome results are difficult to ignore. There is compelling evidence of problems with the implementation and the FMLA, problems affecting both employers and employees. The FMLA is still a relatively young law. In fact, the final rule implementing the Act was not published until 1995. As with any new law, there are some growing pains that need to be sorted out.

Testimony before the Committee on Education and the Workforce has established evidence of myriad problems in the workplace caused by the FMLA. These problems include: the administrative burden of allowing leave to be taken in increments of as little as six minutes; the additional burdens from overly broad and confusing regulations of the FMLA, not the least of which is the Department of Labor's ever-expanding definition of "serious health condition;" and inequities stemming from employers with generous leave policies in effect being penalized under the FMLA for having those policies.

Mr. Speaker, the FMLA created a Commission on Leave, which was charged with reporting the FMLA's impact. Upon release of the Commission's report in April 1996, we were told that all was well with the FMLA. But contrary to these assertions, the report was not a complete picture. In fact the Family and Medical Leave Act Commission admitted its report was only an "initial assessment." Its two year study began in November of 1993, just three months after the Act even applied to most employers and more than a year before the release of final FMLA regulations in January of 1995.

Simply put, the Commission's report was based on old and incomplete data studies long before employers or employees could have been fully aware of the FMLA's many requirements and responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, the first area the FMLA Clarification Act addresses is the Department of Labor's overly broad interpretation of the term